

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 19 MARCH 1957**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy



# Queensland Parliamentary Debates.

## Legislative Assembly.

FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT.

(Second Period)

[VOLUME 3]

TUESDAY, 19 MARCH, 1957.

Under the provisions of the Motion for Special Adjournment agreed to by the House on 9 November, 1956, the House met at 11 a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Mann, Brisbane) took the chair.

BY-ELECTION DURING RECESS;  
ITHACA.

RETURN OF WRIT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that following the issue of a writ on 16 November, 1956, for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ithaca, in the room of Leonard Eastment, Esquire, deceased, the said writ was duly returned to me with a certificate endorsed thereon by the returning officer of the election on 8 December, 1956, of Patrick Joseph Hanlon, Esquire, to serve as such member.

NEW MEMBER.

Mr. P. J. Hanlon was introduced, took the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

Appropriation Bill No. 2.  
Local Government Acts Amendment Bill.  
Stamp Acts Amendment Bill.  
Harbours Act Amendment Bill.  
Public Curator Acts Amendment Bill.  
Government Loan Bill.  
Suppression of Gambling Acts Amendment Bill.  
Statutes Amendment Bill.  
Law Reform (Limitation of Actions) Bill.  
Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act Amendment Bill.  
Crown Remedies Acts Amendment Bill.  
Building Societies Acts Amendment Bill.

Mining on Private Land Acts Amendment Bill.

Acclimatisation Society of Queensland Transfer Bill.

Burdekin River Trust Act Amendment Bill.

Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Bill.

Traffic Acts and Another Act Amendment Bill.

Roma Street to South Brisbane Railway Bill.

ILLNESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR JOHN DUDLEY LAVARACK.

MOTION OF REGRET.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane—Premier) (11.7 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That the members of this Thirty-fourth Parliament assembled here on 19 March, 1957, desire to express their regret at the present illness of His Excellency Sir John Dudley Lavarack, Governor of this State and its Dependencies, and would be glad if the Speaker would convey the best wishes of all members of this House to Sir John for his speedy recovery.”

I am confident that all hon. members will favour the motion. I am sure that each and every hon. member was just as grieved as I was, and the people of the State of Queensland, to learn in January of this year that His Excellency had been forced to relinquish temporarily, owing to illness, his duties as Governor of this State.

Since Sir John Dudley Lavarack assumed his high office in 1946, more than 10 years ago, he has undeniably devoted himself strenuously and enthusiastically to the performance of the duties attaching to his office.

Accompanied by Lady Lavarack he has travelled extensively to almost every part of this vast State and has taken the opportunity of meeting the citizens of Queensland, discussing with them their problems and the progress of their districts. He has not

spared himself in meeting the demands of his office, which he has done so readily and graciously, and they have taken their toll and brought about his illness which necessitates rest.

We in this House realise only too well the physical and mental strain which attend public life. We can sympathise with Sir John. I feel I am speaking not only for the members of this Parliament, but for the people of the State of Queensland, when I say that we sincerely regret his illness and that it is our earnest wish that he make a speedy and complete recovery so that he will be able to resume the administration of this State and display the high standard of leadership of which he has given such abundant evidence since he occupied his position. It goes without saying that the people of Queensland will support this motion as I am sure every hon. member of this Assembly will readily do so.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.11 a.m.): In supporting the motion moved by the Premier expressing our regret at the illness of Sir John Lavarack I appreciate as the Premier remarked the heavy toll that public duties have taken upon His Excellency during the time he has been Governor of the State. I join with the Premier in his remarks and trust that His Excellency will shortly be returned to full health and be able to resume his official duties. During the time he was engaged in his military career Sir John suffered great stress and strain by the tremendous responsibilities he had to shoulder as a soldier, particularly in the campaign in North Africa when fortunes swayed from day to day. That must have taken tremendous toll of his health and which, associated with the duties and responsibilities of his high office in the State, caused his present illness. We all hope and trust that he will shortly be restored to good health and able to resume in full his duties as Governor of Queensland. As the Premier said, he has not spared himself in any way; almost annually he travelled thousands of miles throughout the State to come into contact with the people, especially in the far-flung parts. They appreciate the sacrifices made by Sir John and Lady Lavarack in undertaking these trips.

I am sure everyone will join with hon. members in expressing to His Excellency our good wishes for his speedy recovery to health.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

##### ILLNESS OF GOVERNOR; APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (11.14 a.m.), by leave: On Friday, 25 January, 1957, Sir Alexander Murphy, the physician attending His Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Sir

John Dudley Lavarack, informed me that as a result of illness, Sir John was incapable of discharging the duties of administration with which His Excellency was charged as Governor of this State, and that Sir John would continue to be so incapable for a period, the duration whereof Sir Alexander was then unable to certify.

By virtue of the powers contained in the Dormant Commission passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, appointing the Chief Justice, or the Senior Judge for the time being, of Queensland, to administer the Government of the State of Queensland and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia, in the event of the death, absence or incapacity of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor (if any), issued by Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, on the twenty-ninth day of October, 1900, the Chief Justice of Queensland, the Honourable Alan James Mansfield, on 25 January, 1957, issued a Proclamation advising that Sir John Lavarack was presently incapable of discharging the duties of administration of the Government of Queensland and its Dependencies, and that he had taken the prescribed Oaths before the Honourable Roslyn Foster Bowie Philp, Senior Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland, and had assumed the administration of the Government of the said State and its dependencies. From that moment, the Honourable Alan James Mansfield became His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, and I lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the "Government Gazette Extraordinary" containing the details of this Proclamation.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the document on the table.

#### ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

##### JUDGE FOR 1957.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt of a letter from His Honour the Chief Justice intimating that His Honour Mr. Justice Philp would be the judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the year 1957.

#### CIRCULATION AND COST OF "HANSARD".

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Chief Reporter, State Reporting Bureau, on the circulation and cost of "Hansard" for the session of 1955.

#### DEATH OF MR. G. C. TAYLOR.

##### MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (11.16 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late George Cuthbert Taylor, Esquire, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

“2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.”

The late George Cuthbert Taylor, who was a Victorian by birth, served the people of Queensland in the 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th Parliaments. He entered the Queensland Parliament in the same year as I did, being elected on 11th June, 1932 as representative for the electorate of Enoggera, which is now known as Mt. Coot-tha. He was defeated at the State election of 1944.

The late Mr. Taylor will be remembered as a vigorous member of Parliament, and as a forceful speaker who took a very keen interest in the debates in this House. He was a student of economic problems, and it could never be said that he was afraid to give expression to his views, whether they pleased or not. I believe he was quite sincere in the views he expressed, and he is entitled to credit for that.

The late Mr. Taylor was born in 1885 and had been, I understand, a very good athlete in his time. He worked in many industries, including the shearing industry; he had been an organiser for the Australian Workers' Union in Victoria and he spent two years as a miner at Broken Hill. He enlisted in the A.I.F. in World War I. and served in the Middle East and France. On his discharge he came to Queensland, where his first job was with an engineering firm at Kangaroo Point. He subsequently returned to the shearing industry in Western Queensland, where he became closely identified with the Labour movement. He was very interested in the Workers' Educational Association and was also for some years president of the Returned Soldiers' Labour League. Even when he was a member of this House, he retained an active interest in foot-racing and did all he could to encourage that sport in this State.

We convey our heartfelt sympathy to the relatives and friends of a former member of this Assembly, Mr. George Cuthbert Taylor.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.19 a.m.): I realise fully the work done by the late Mr. George Cuthbert Taylor as a member of this House. As the Premier has said, he entered this Parliament in 1932, the same year as the Premier and I came here.

We on this side of the House recognise that the late George Taylor was both an excellent organiser and a very energetic man. He entered the House in 1932 by taking from us a seat that we thought we would retain. While here, he made many forceful contributions to the debate. As the Premier has said, he was not afraid to express his opinions. Indeed, he was a man of particularly strong convictions—so strong that eventually they led him to break with his Party though it may

have meant political suicide for him. He was always prepared to fight for principles and in the political world he went down fighting for them.

During his term of office he had the advantage of valuable help from his energetic wife, who was a great worker in his electorate.

In the A.I.F. he served his country with distinction and he thereafter maintained a keen interest in the affairs of the Forces and returned soldiers.

He was a valued member of this Assembly. We deeply regret his passing and join with the Premier in extending his relatives our heartfelt sympathy.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

#### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

- Order in Council under the Patriotic Funds Acts, 1942 to 1953.
- Proclamations under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1955 and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1954.
- Ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1954.
- Order in Council under the Sewerage, Water Supply, and Gasfitting Acts, 1949 to 1951.
- Order in Council under the Co-ordination of Rural Advances and Agricultural Bank Acts, 1938 to 1951.
- Order in Council under the Explosives Act of 1952.
- Order in Council under the Fish and Oyster Acts, 1914 to 1955.
- Order in Council under the Harbours Act of 1955.
- Order in Council under the Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1956.
- Order in Council under the Racing and Betting Act of 1954.
- Order in Council under the Tully Sugar Works Acts, 1930 to 1937.
- Regulations under the Fish and Oyster Acts, 1914 to 1955.
- Regulations under the Fish Supply Management Acts, 1935 to 1951, and the Acts Interpretation Act of 1954.
- Regulations under the Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1956.
- Regulations under the Navigation Acts, 1876 to 1950.
- Regulations under the Racing and Betting Act of 1954.
- Regulations under the Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1955.
- Regulations under the Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1956.
- Regulations under the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1956.

- Proclamations under the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1954.
- Order in Council under the Abattoirs Acts, 1930 to 1949.
- Order in Council under the Dairy Products Stabilisation Acts, 1933 to 1936.
- Order in Council under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1955.
- Regulations under the Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1956.
- Regulations under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1955.
- Regulations under the Stock Acts, 1915 to 1954.
- Regulations under the Motor Spirit Vendors Acts, 1933 to 1934.
- Order in Council under the Roofing Tiles Act of 1949.
- By-law under the Pharmacy Acts, 1917 to 1939.
- Regulations under the Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, 1928 to 1948.
- Order in Council under the Medical Acts, 1939 to 1955.
- Rule under the Police Acts, 1937 to 1955.
- Order in Council under the Bread Delivery Act of 1946.
- Rules of Court under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1955.
- Regulation under the Statistical Returns Acts, 1896 to 1935.
- Orders in Council under the Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1954, and the Irrigation Areas (Land Settlement) Acts, 1933 to 1954.
- Orders in Council under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1951.
- Orders in Council under the Rural Fires Acts, 1946 to 1955.
- Orders in Council under the Barrier Fences Act of 1954.
- Regulations under the Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1954 and the Irrigation Areas (Land Settlement) Acts, 1933 to 1954.
- Regulations under the Water Acts, 1926 to 1954.
- Regulations under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1955.
- Regulations under the State Forests and National Parks Acts, 1906 to 1948.
- Timber and Quarry Regulations under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1955.
- Regulations under the Apprentices and Minors Acts, 1929 to 1954.

#### QUESTION.

##### STATE HOUSING FINANCE.

**Mr. ROBINSON** (Sandgate), without notice, asked the Treasurer—

“Has the attention of the Hon. the Treasurer been drawn to a statement by the Commonwealth Treasurer appearing in the

‘Telegraph’ of the 15th and ‘The Courier-Mail’ of the 16th March to the effect that, following an announcement by Senator Spooner, Minister for National Development on 9 March, that Queensland was entitled to draw an additional £500,000 for housing, the Queensland Government applied for the allocation of this sum without any public announcement, and while still blaming the Commonwealth for shortage of housing funds.

“The Commonwealth Treasurer’s statement went on to say that this money could have been drawn long ago so that the crisis in Queensland’s housing scheme had been manufactured by the State Government.

“If the Treasurer is aware of this statement will he inform the House whether it is correct and what are the facts in connection with this matter?”

**Hon. E. J. WALSH** (Bundaberg) replied—

“Yes, I am aware of the statement of the Federal Treasurer. I can only reiterate what I have said in the Press. The statement is definitely not correct. Queensland has drawn every penny of loan money offered by the Commonwealth for the current financial year.

“At the Loan Council meeting held in June, 1956, it was resolved, with the Commonwealth dissenting, that the amount to be borrowed by the Commonwealth and States in 1956-1957 would be £210 million.

“By unanimous decision the amounts allocated to Queensland were £21,277,000 for the Works programme and £3,040,000 under the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement.

“The Commonwealth undertook to make advances to the States based on a £190 million borrowing programme, to be reviewed at the end of six months. They have since agreed to continue advances on the basis of £190 million as against the £210 million unanimously decided by the Premiers.

“If effect had been given to the decision of the Premiers the amount available for housing under the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement would have been £35,532,000.

“Thus the decision of the Commonwealth to reduce the total loan borrowing programme to £190 million, despite the unanimous decision of the Premiers that the borrowing programme for the Commonwealth and States should be £210 million, reduced the amount available for housing from £35,532,000 to £32,150,000. This made a reduction in the Queensland allocation under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement from £3,040,000 to £2,750,000 or £290,000. It will be noted that this is only £12,000 in excess of the amount being asked by the Housing Commission to enable it to continue in employment 400 building workers about to be dismissed.

“By letter dated 25 July, 1956, the Commonwealth Treasury offered to make a monthly advance to Queensland of £1,833,000, based on a total Loan programme of £190,000,000, of which Queensland would receive £19,250,000 for Works and £2,750,000 for Housing.

“These advances are received about the 15th of each month. The practice is for the State to notify the Commonwealth the manner in which the advance of £1,833,000 is to be allocated between Works and Housing.

“The 1945 Housing Agreement was continued until 30 June, 1956, and negotiations relative to the new agreement were protracted beyond that date, due to new conditions imposed by the Commonwealth. The new agreement was not ratified by the State Parliament until 9 November, 1956, and in fact was not signed by all parties until 13 February, 1957. Advances during July to October, inclusive, were accordingly apportioned wholly to Works, and Housing was financed from the State's available cash. Advances to date have been allocated as follows:

	Works.	Housing.	Total.
	£	£	£
21 August	2,000,000	..	2,000,000
28 August	1,000,000	..	1,000,000
18 September	2,499,000	..	2,499,000
15 October	1,833,000	..	1,833,000
16 November	1,158,000	675,000	1,833,000
18 December	1,685,000	150,000	1,835,000
22 January	1,835,000	..	1,835,000
15 February	1,082,000	750,000	1,832,000
15 March	1,333,000	500,000	1,833,000
	14,425,000	2,075,000	16,500,000

“The amount due to the State for the nine months ended 31 March, under the Commonwealth's offer, is Works £14,437,500 and Housing £2,062,500. Drawings, in actual fact, have been allocated Works £14,425,000 and Housing £2,075,000.

“I put these questions to the Commonwealth Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, and the Commonwealth Minister for National Development, Senator Spooner:

‘Is it not a fact that the total Governmental loan borrowing programme for Queensland for 1956-1957, under the conditions imposed by the Commonwealth Government, is £22,000,000?’

‘Did not the Commonwealth offer to make advances to Queensland of this amount at the rate of £1,833,000 per month?’

‘Has not Queensland accepted every penny due to it under the Commonwealth's offer?’

‘Did not the Commonwealth make a special allocation of £2,000,000 to the Western Australian Government from the Commonwealth's own resources during the current financial year in view of the employment position in that State?’

‘Does not Queensland receive a lower per capita allocation of Governmental loan moneys than any other State?’

“I might also draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that the loan moneys made available for the construction of homes under the State Housing Acts, as distinct from homes erected in accordance with the Commonwealth States Housing Agreement, are not sufficient to enable the Housing Commission to make advances for the completion of existing contracts and contracts in the process of being signed or in the various stages of preparation. In the latter instances these amount to 182 dwellings.

“Cabinet has therefore approved that the Housing Commission will be authorised to go into overdraft to the extent of £102,000 so that existing contracts and contracts in process of being signed may be proceeded with.

“Unless sufficient funds are made available this £102,000 will have to be deducted from next year's allocation, thus reducing the amount available during that year.

“It should be of interest to hon. members that the percentage of people owning their own homes or in the process of purchasing them is higher in Queensland than in any other State in Australia.

“According to the last census in 1954, the number of persons owning their own homes, or in the process of purchasing, is shown at 74.4 per cent. of the total number of private dwellings in Queensland. This shows an increase of nearly 8 per cent., as compared with the census of 1947.

“For the financial year 1955-1956, 634 workers' dwellings were completed, and the Housing Commission estimates that 800 will be completed during 1956-1957, subject to the necessary finance being available.

“The foregoing figures clearly indicate that the Labour Government in this State has led the way so far as the provision of homes and the finance for the purchase of homes are concerned.

“I might add, for the information of hon. members, that in addition to the 400 building workers about to be dismissed, since 1 July last it has been necessary, owing to shortage of funds, to effect the following reductions in the number of Crown employees:—

Forestry .. .. .	416
Irrigation .. .. .	508
Public Works .. .. .	300
Railways .. .. .	500”

#### TRADES AND LABOUR HALL MANAGEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark Fitzroy, in the chair.)

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (11.48 a.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Trades and Labour Hall Management Acts, 1934 to 1954, in certain particulars.”

This is a short Bill. It is to increase from £25,000 to £50,000 the amount that the trustees of the Brisbane Trades Hall may borrow upon the security of the hall. Hon. members will recollect that in 1954 I introduced a similar Bill to give the trustees of the Trades Hall power to borrow up to £25,000.

The Trades Hall is built on freehold land vested in trustees under the Real Property Act, and until the passing of the Bill in 1954 the trustees were empowered to borrow money only for the erection of the original building. However, with the growth of the State and of trade unionism generally, the demand for accommodation in the Trades Hall has grown equally with that for accommodation in all other buildings in the city of Brisbane and other places outside the metropolitan area.

As I say, prior to 1954 the trustees could mortgage the hall property only for the purpose of borrowing capital to erect it, but in 1954 Parliament gave them permission to borrow up to £25,000 to extend the building.

**Mr. Aikens:** When you get round to it, will you explain why it is necessary for them to get legislative sanction to mortgage their own property?

**Mr. GAIR:** The Act requires them to get the consent of Parliament. They find that £25,000 is inadequate for their purposes, and in view of increased building costs, that is understandable. So they have asked the Government through Parliament to raise the limit to £50,000. The request is a reasonable one and the Bill should meet with the approval of hon. members.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (11.51 a.m.): We have no objection to the Bill because today, as in 1954, we realise the need for the Trades Hall Management Committee to extend their building activities. Apparently the tenants of the Trades Hall have been caught up with something of their own doing. Much of the increase in building costs is due to their actions and, in common with the rest of the community, they have to pay more. So they have to double their overdraft within two years.

It is interesting to note that the Trades Hall is built on freehold land. One might have expected the tenants to ask the Premier to convert the property to perpetual lease but, knowing the value of freehold land for their purposes, I guarantee they will hold on to freehold for a long time and not apply for its conversion.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Gair, read a first time.

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (11.56 a.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Weights and Measures Act of 1951 in certain particulars.”

This is a Bill to amend the Weights and Measures Act of 1951 in certain particulars. It may be truthfully said that at various times there has been much public criticism of the quality of bread in Queensland, particularly in Brisbane—I suppose with some justification. There have been numerous prosecutions of bakers throughout the State for making for sale bread deficient in the prescribed weights. The prosecutions have generally resulted in the imposition of fines.

The practice of inspectors at bakehouses is to select a minimum number of loaves of various denominations, 1 lb., 2 lb., and 4 lb., which have not been out of the oven for an unreasonable length of time, and to weigh such loaves to ascertain firstly whether weights generally are correct and, if not, to secure evidence for prosecution.

The Master Bakers' Association of Queensland and the Associated Bread Manufacturers of Queensland have made these representations—

(a) These associations are also anxious to prevent dishonesty by their individual members;

(b) The advice and assistance of the Bread Research Institute, Sydney, was available in any effort to improve the position; the view of the many competent persons was to the effect, as had been proved by numerous experiments, that bread whilst it lost weight rapidly when hot, after being taken from the oven continued to lose weight by evaporation of liquid contents, and that this fact coupled with the fear of prosecution for short-weight bread, was a major factor in the poor quality of certain breads, the bakers of which preferred to underbake the bread rather than to produce a good product.

These associations asked that in addition to the present system of weighing loaves of bread a dry solids content system be implemented.

In support of their request for the dry solids content system the associations pointed out—

(a) This system was in force in certain European countries, notably Holland;

(b) It was simpler for a baker, who would know the exact weight of solids per loaf and who need not then be concerned

as to the amount of moisture added nor fearful of reducing the weight by well baking;

(c) The testing of bread for its dry solids content was a comparatively simple procedure;

(d) Provided a loaf somewhat deficient in the prescribed weight had the specified dry solids content (with the nourishment of the wheaten flour) the spirit of the Weights and Measures Act was complied with and the consumer had a better product.

The Government Analyst was asked if his office could undertake the necessary tests if such a system were instituted and he said it could. In any case the weights and measures section itself could quickly undertake the testing requirements, which is the complete drying out of moisture in a loaf by heating, and then weighing. The discussions culminated in a conference on Thursday, 19 May, 1955, at which there were present the Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures, Mr. A. C. Breguet; the Assistant Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures, Mr. W. W. Budge; the Secretary, Associated Bread Manufacturers of Queensland, Mr. D. Black; the Director, Bread Research Institute, Sydney, Mr. E. Bond; the Government Analyst, Mr. S. B. Watkins; the Deputy Government Analyst, Mr. A. S. Hurwood; the Chief Inspector, Department of Health, Mr. W. Kelly. The Government Analyst and his Deputy agreed that the minimum dry solids content for a 2-lb. loaf of bread should be 19.2 ozs.—60 per cent. of 32 ozs. It was agreed by all present that the scheme as finally outlined in a draft proposed regulation was both desirable and practicable.

The Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures has recommended that the dry solids content system for testing bread be adopted and implemented in conjunction with existing legislation.

The intention of the amendments is—

(a) to ensure that the public get a certain minimum amount of solid nourishment in each loaf, 19.2 ozs.;

(b) to protect the honest baker from unfair prosecution.

I propose to develop that argument later on.

Under the Act bread is weighed and is either satisfactory or under weight. Even when satisfactory in actual weight, the loaf may have excess water content. The actual solid nourishment content per loaf can be deficient. Thus bread, though satisfactory in weight, removing from the vendor the liability for prosecution, does not necessarily provide the buying public with a minimum amount of solids per loaf.

**Mr. Hiley:** Nor decent bread, either.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** That is true. On the other hand, the baker who puts the correct amount of solids into his bread but who thoroughly bakes his bread to improve the quality, may produce a loaf which under existing legislation would be deemed to be short weight.

For the past three years the practical application in using this dry solids system of testing bread has been very carefully and fully tried out with the co-operation of the Government Analyst, the Master Bakers' Association, the Associated Bread Manufacturers of Queensland and the Bread Research Institute, Sydney. A large number of loaves has been tested over this period to check the practical implementation of this proposed legislation. These tests have given very satisfactory and convincing results of the improvement which can be expected from thus standardising the actual bread value to the public. The assistance to bread bakers and manufacturers in producing better bread with very simple methods of checking and testing for solids content weight is also a very important improvement on previous methods.

The Bill contains two minor provisions in no way related to bread.

Clause 7 amends section 41 (2) and makes it clear that any defective weighing or measuring instrument may be submitted to any inspector, not necessarily the chief inspector.

At the present time the Act requires that it be submitted to the chief inspector in Brisbane. This clause will overcome unnecessary expenditure and waste of time in forwarding the instrument to the chief inspector in Brisbane.

Clause 9 corrects a long-standing misprint in the Schedule of Standard Metric Carat Weights under Board of Trade Certificate No. 1585. For many years, through an oversight, the figure "0" has been left out in one instance. If I had been asked to state the position, I could have replied only that the questioner's guess was as good as mine. In the Schedule, Standard Weights and Measures of Queensland, appearing at the end of the Weights and Measures Act of 1951, an error was made in printing the list headed "Metric Carat Weights—Certificate No. 1585". This certificate issued by the Board of Trade, London, certifies to the accuracy of these weights, which are part of this State's primary standards of weight and measurement, deposited at the Treasury, Brisbane.

The term "C.M." is the permissible abbreviation for the words "Metric Carat" provided for in Schedule H of the Weights and Measures Regulations of 1953. At present the weight at the bottom of the second column is shown as 0.05 of a metric carat. This should be 0.005 of a metric carat. One nought was omitted in the printing and so this weight was shown as ten times its true value. This alteration makes this list of

weights strictly and legally correct, and makes the Schedule a true copy of the weights listed in the Board of Trade certificate.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra) (12.8 p.m.): I welcome this Bill, particularly as it relates to the weighing of bread. There is no more contentious problem facing the housewives of Queensland than the weight of bread they buy from the baker, either at the door, at the bakery, or elsewhere. Numerous representations have been made to me from time to time about lightweight bread, and those representations do not apply only to Townsville. I travel fairly extensively in North Queensland and to get a true picture of the position I made it my practice to weigh bread turned out by bakers in various North Queensland towns. It is only on rare occasions that a loaf of bread weighing 2 lb. can be bought. In one town in North-Western Queensland a 1-lb. loaf of bread is sold for the price of a 2-lb. loaf. That is the worst instance in North Queensland.

**Mr. Gair:** Is that a fancy class of bread?

**Mr. AIKENS:** No.

**Mr. Hiley:** That baker would be in trouble under the new test as well as the old one.

**Mr. AIKENS:** He probably would be in trouble, but I have still to be convinced that the new system is any better than the old one. The Minister told us, I think in reply to an interjection by the hon. member for Coorparoo, that the new system will be supplementary to the old and that both systems will still be in operation.

**Mr. Hiley:** Either test can be applied, the weight on the scales or the analysis.

**Mr. AIKENS:** That is so. I ask hon. members to make a simple test by buying a loaf of bread anywhere in Queensland and putting it on the scales. I am prepared to bet 20 to one that it does not weigh 2 lb.

Whether this is the fault of the baker in giving an excessive moisture content or whether he has been only concerned with giving the populace the right nutriment content, I do not know. I do know however that this is and has been a serious bone of contention with housewives in Queensland for many years. I should not like to tell hon. members how many times people have complained to me in Townsville about short-weight bread and about the fancy loaves the Premier mentioned in his interjection. Anybody who knows anything about fancy bread knows that these loaves are made of the contents of ordinary bread with a little bit of something extra added or a little starch or something else taken out. Then we have the racket of brown bread, with the particular types of special brown bread. All this bread consists of, in most instances, is ordinary dough with a

little molasses added. It is turned out as a special brown loaf and a special price is asked for it.

**Mr. Hiley** interjected.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I want the hon. member for Coorparoo to realise that I am in a position to know quite a lot about the baking trade for reasons I do not want to disclose to the Committee.

**Mr. Gair:** You have got plenty of dough.

**Mr. AIKENS:** If I have plenty of dough I have earned it honestly by the sweat of my brow and the labour of my muscles.

**Mr. Gair:** I suppose you need it all.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I give a lot away. I welcome this legislation. I think that every housewife in Queensland will welcome it whether she be from a home that supports the Liberal Country Party or whether she is from a home that has traditionally voted for the Labour Party. Ask the average housewife what is her most pressing problem or the thing which touches her most and she will answer the quality of bread and underweight bread.

**Mr. Plunkett:** I suppose it would not be the "old man."

**Mr. AIKENS:** I suppose if she was the wife of the hon. member she would have plenty of room to complain. If this legislation will solve the problem of the housewife the Secretary for Mines will be deserving of the commendation of this Committee and the people of Queensland. She is the pigeon when all is said and done because it is she who buys the bread and it is to her that complaints are laid by the "old man" as the hon. member for Darlington calls him. She knows she is getting touched by underweight and poor quality bread but feels that she cannot do anything but complain to me or other members of Parliament who are interested in the subject.

**Mr. HILEY** (Coorparoo) (12.14 p.m.): From the outline of the measure that the Minister has given I should say that it will be wholeheartedly welcomed by hon. members on this side. The deficiencies in the old methods of testing the weight of bread have been commented upon by my colleagues for years and years. The Government have contented themselves with the shadow of good weight bread, by imposing rigid scale tests and throwing away the substance of quality. I am glad to hear from the Minister that from now on the test to be applied to the correct weight of bread will no longer be a penalty on good baking practice. Anyone with experience is able to say that for a loaf to have good-keeping qualities it must be properly baked. I ask those who foment so much about this question of weight of bread to ask themselves whether the housewife is better off by securing over the scales the last ounce of over-moist bread if as a

result her percentage of waste is greater because she has to throw away a portion which will not keep because of the excessive moisture.

**Mr. Gair:** That is indisputable.

**Mr. HILEY:** It is indisputable.

For the information of the hon. member for Mundingburra, who doubts whether the solids test will apply, both chemically and technically there is no doubt that a solids test, which is a measure of the retained solids after excluding all surplus moisture, is a positive and accurate means of determining the real material content of a loaf of bread. Anyone who understands the properties of flour will know that it has a variable gluten content. According to that content, it is possible for some flours to absorb more water than others although they can still form dough of satisfactory consistency. A baker who buys flour of a high gluten content knows that by lightly baking his bread he will get as many as four more loaves out of a bag of flour than one who is working with flour of a lower gluten content.

**Mr. Gair:** One makes up the weight with moisture.

**Mr. HILEY:** As the Premier says, one makes up the weight with moisture, and he gets paid for it. The hon. member for Mundingburra could well be an excellent illustration of that. The human body contains a good deal of moisture, as well as some solids. If all the excess moisture and wind in the hon. member's body was removed, I suggest he would weigh only about 1 stone 8 lb.

I repeat, this is a scientific and accurate approach to the matter. The proposal will put a premium on good baking practice. It is something that my colleagues and I welcome. We have urged it for many years. I congratulate the Minister on at last seeing the wisdom of working in conjunction with the Bread Research Institute, and bringing forward an enlightened and useful formula.

**Mr. COBURN (Burdekin) (12.18 p.m.):** I think everybody will agree that this is a very desirable amendment. Most bakers who have been charged with selling underweight bread have claimed that the dough was of the correct weight, and that weight had been lost after baking by the evaporation of moisture. Their claims must have impressed the Minister, or he would not have gone to the trouble of providing for an analysis of the important part of the loaf, that is, the solids content of the loaf which contains the nutriment. We are now giving bakers the opportunity of baking bread of the best quality. If it is not of the correct weight it will be classed as acceptable if it has the correct weight of solids content.

The quality of a loaf of bread is much more important than its weight. If its quality is not such that it will keep and is palatable

and digestible, a good deal of it is thrown away. The loss caused in that way would be much greater than if the loaf was not of the correct weight.

I am not competent, of course, to judge whether bakers have been correct in their claim that a loaf was of the correct weight when it was put into the oven. In future they will not be able to use that argument because the scientific analysis of the bread will show whether it has the right quality and solids content.

**Mr. Aikens:** Will cigarette dumpers in the loaves count as solids content in the weight?

**Mr. COBURN:** That will depend on the analysis. I think it is much more scientific than the method used in the past, and it will be acceptable not only to hon. members but also to housewives generally.

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (12.21 p.m.):** If I understood the hon. member for Mundingburra correctly, he alleged that most of the bakers of North Queensland were underweight in their bread.

**Mr. Aikens:** About 19 out of 20, I should say.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** That is a rather strange statement. If true, it can be attributed to one of two things: either they are over-baking the bread or they are not putting the solids content into the loaf in the first place. About October last year two Townsville bakers were fined for giving short-weight bread. However, we are trying to give the honest baker an incentive to produce a healthful loaf. Much of the illhealth in the community may be attributed to faulty bread. If the moisture is not taken out of bread in North Queensland, for example, the loaf will go mouldy very quickly. I know that the hon. member for Mundingburra lets his imagination run riot at times.

**Mr. Aikens:** There is no imagination in this.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** I do not think he is being fair to the bakers of North Queensland when he says that 90 per cent. of them give short-weight bread.

**Mr. Aikens:** I bet that would be the percentage in Longreach and Winton, too, in your electorate.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** No. If a baker makes up the weight of the loaf by under-baking, in other words by leaving the moisture in it, the solids content of the 2-lb. loaf might be 15, 16 or 17 ozs.

**Mr. Coburn:** He is the dishonest one.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** That is so. On the other hand, the baker who wants to give a good loaf, to play the game and avoid prosecution, may bake the moisture out of the bread and

produce a loaf weighing less than 2 lb. but containing 19.2 ozs. of solids. However, my officers have definitely assured me that, if that bread is baked in the oven for the prescribed time, it will turn out a 2-lb. loaf. If a man does not lay himself open to prosecution, I think the Minister should exercise a discretion.

**Mr. Aikens:** Are you saying that your officers have been prosecuting, or persecuting, honest bakers by taking them to court?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** No, I would not go as far as that, because the legislation must be carried out. Call it what you like; I do not say it is persecution. If any man has broken the law, whatever the Act, and it is suggested that he has been persecuted, we must remove that possibility.

**Dr. Noble:** The old legislation makes bad bread.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** The old legislation was the means of protecting the dishonest baker. People today are paying for water and not for the solids content. We learn as we go along. Sometimes we are a little belated in doing these things. Following the research that the authorities have made into bread manufactured over the past three years at least we should give it a trial. As a result of the new legislation I hope that the honest baker will be protected and the fellow who has not been honest will have an incentive to follow suit in giving the people of Queensland a good loaf of bread.

**Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (12.26 p.m.):** We are dealing with an extremely important Bill. I can remember very clearly the debate on bread manufacture some years ago in this Chamber. It was very much more complicated than it is today but I remember that the Opposition pointed out in no uncertain terms that a method such as this would give an incentive to bakers who wanted to turn out a quality loaf. I agree with what the Minister has just said. The Bill will give them the incentive that I believe they should have had years ago. The legislation we discussed some years ago about securing and testing bread was very complicated in many ways. I think the present Attorney-General piloted the Bill through the House at that time. I would go so far as to say that if certain amendments suggested from this side of the Chamber had been accepted then the legislation would have done the very thing the Government are doing now. Although the Bill is very much overdue it is welcome; it will result in many bakers providing a better cooked loaf.

The statements of the hon. member for Mundingburra illustrate his exaggeration to an unusual degree. I am sure that he did not know his facts about underweight bread.

**Mr. Walsh:** You could have overweight loaves with a lot of dough in them. I have taken bread from Parliament House to Cabinet which could be rolled up into little balls of dough.

**Mr. MORRIS:** That is really the point I am making. We get doughy bread because of the bad legislation introduced some years ago. It was really responsible for the doughiness of the bad bread.

**Mr. Walsh:** You do not have to go to North Queensland to get bad bread. You can get any amount of it down here.

**Mr. MORRIS:** Of course you do. The Government have forced bad bread onto the people by their stupid legislation introduced some years ago. Had the Government adopted our advice we would have had then what we are doing now. I think the new legislation will do much good.

**Mr. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) (12.29 p.m.):** I think the proposed legislation will make some improvement in the quality of bread. In my opinion, one of the greatest contributing factors to bad bread of the past, something that perhaps encouraged bakers to weigh in light, was the attitude of the Department of Labour and Industry. It did nothing but hound the bakers about starting-times and this applies in Mackay and no doubt elsewhere. Many bakers were fined £10, £20, £30 and more for starting work early.

What difference does it make what time they start? No housewife, no working man, wants to use Saturday's bread on Monday morning. Owing to the urgent demand for it it is taken out of the oven before it is completely cooked. It is high time that we called these dogs off the bakers and allowed the bakers to fix their own time for working and so ensure decent bread for the people.

**Mr. Aikens:** You want them to work when they like and how they like.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** There is no reason why they should not be able to work when they like and how they like. My remarks apply particularly to the North. If the staff prefer to commence work at 2 a.m. when it is much cooler, they should not be prevented from doing so. If they wish to start early and knock off early they should not be prevented from doing so.

**Mr. Aikens:** I do not think the hon. member has ever worked night shift.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** The hon. member might be familiar with night shifts on certain vehicles. I have worked night shift on many jobs but I am not acquainted with those that he knows so much about.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.33 p.m.):** We have listened to some very interesting speeches on the quality and baking of bread during the last few years. The Minister's speech reminded me of the remarks of the late Tom Kerr, member for Sherwood, to the effect that it was a fallacy to endeavour to maintain a standard loaf. He showed conclusively that the best bakers were

penalised. It is more essential to produce a high-quality loaf, although slightly underweight than a poor-quality loaf of standard weight. The hon. member for Mundingburra was reared in the damper area.

**Mr. Aikens:** Not in the champagne and chicken area like you.

**Mr. MULLER:** There is nothing wrong with damper at all. People are not so much concerned about the exact number of ounces in a loaf as they are with its quality. It gets under one's skin to find these inspectors—in many cases parasites—issuing prosecutions if they find a loaf is half an ounce underweight. During the last few weeks we have been perturbed about the quality of our wheat that has been diverted to the South. The bungling and stupidity of the Prices Branch is forcing wheat over the border. We must have regard to the quality of our wheat. The yield per acre of high-protein wheat is lower than that of other varieties. If producers of high-protein wheat are penalised and have to send their wheat to the South, we are not going to get bread of better quality.

I am not an expert in wheat growing, but the Bill enables me to draw the Minister's attention to what can be done to improve the quality of bread. I suggest that he seriously consider the wisdom of incorporating a percentage of milk powder in all bread. He knows a good deal about the investigation and experimental work that has been carried out in connection with the incorporation of milk powder in bread. Officers of the Technical College have demonstrated beyond all doubt that bread can be improved considerably if small quantities of milk powder are incorporated.

Bread is quite nice when fresh, but in a day or two it is not fit for use. That is not so if milk powder is added; it will keep at least three or four days. The nutritive value of bread is certainly increased if milk powder is added.

The Attorney-General, who is in charge of the Prices Branch, has said that bakers may add milk powder, but he will not let them charge any more for that bread. If the housewife was given her choice she would take bread in which milk powder had been added, but in view of the practice of the Prices Branch bakers cannot afford to bake it.

There are many high-quality milk powders on the market—skimmed milk, full-cream milk powder and buttermilk—all at a reasonable price. I hope the Minister will consider my suggestion.

We have not been able to publicise this matter as much as we would like to have done. Work has been done on it by the Butter Board, officers of the Technical College and the Master Bakers' Association, but the stumbling block is price. There are some problems but they could be surmounted. It may be said that such a scheme would

be open to abuse, that an excessive price would be charged, but if an extra penny or twopence a loaf was charged the housewife would get a loaf of much greater nutritional value, more palatable and acceptable in every way. Interested parties have been hammering at this suggestion for some time, but they have had the greatest difficulty in persuading the Prices Branch in Queensland and in the other States to agree to an increased price for this type of bread. The Prices Branch in Queensland is tougher perhaps than any other branch in Australia, perhaps in the world. By their stubborn stand they prevent something of benefit not only to the butter producers but also to the community as a whole. My suggestion is worthy of consideration.

**Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona—Attorney-General) (12.39 p.m.): I did not intend to speak on this debate, but I cannot allow the statements of the hon. member for Fassifern to go unanswered.

The Weights and Measures Act was introduced to ensure that the community obtained the quantity of the commodity for which they were paying. There have been many attempts by people to get round the Act. I amended the Act some time ago, and I drew attention to the practice of certain people. It is amazing to hear hon. members opposite advocate high prices and low wages. The hon. member for Fassifern is well known for his attacks upon the Prices Branch because it has insisted on price fixed on weight. His suggestion that the housewife would prefer to pay another 2d. a loaf for bread with milk or other ingredients is hooey and not commonsense. The housewife goes where she can get bread and other household commodities at the cheapest possible price so that she will have sufficient money to meet her family budget.

**Mr. Morris** interjected.

**Mr. POWER:** The hon. member is an advocate of high prices and the abolition of price control.

**Mr. Morris:** Of course.

**Mr. POWER:** I am glad that that remark will be incorporated in "Hansard"; it will be useful at the next election. I will see that it is not taken out. The Prices Branch is a watch-dog to see that people are not exploited. The reflection cast upon the Commissioner of Prices is entirely unwarranted and not justified. All the complaints against him have on investigation been exploded.

In the case of oil it was proved on investigation that Queensland did not depart from the price fixing formula, but South Australia did. It is interesting to note that the oil companies included £18,000,000 which had been invested in one-brand stations, and had always been disallowed by Prices Commissioners but Mr. Murphy claimed that he had excluded this amount, and also that the oil

companies sought an increase of 1½d. per gallon in the price, and this was based on the inclusion of the £18,000,000 as capital invested. Mr. Murphy states that he disallowed the £18,000,000, and still granted the full increase sought by the oil companies. This shows that he departed from the formula. The attacks on the Commissioner of Prices are unwarranted, and I am very happy to defend him.

**Mr. TURNER** (Kelvin Grove) (12.44 p.m.): I support the Bill to give better quality bread to the people. It will encourage the honest baker who wants to give a wholesome loaf to his customer and at the same time it will eliminate those unscrupulous manufacturers who have caused inspectors of the department to chase through the suburbs of Brisbane on Sundays to stop them from defying the law. They have had to have recourse to huge hammers to break into bakehouses to see whether bakers were obeying the industrial laws of the State. Some bakers have placed broken glass on the walls surrounding their properties to prevent inspectors from climbing into their bakehouses. This Bill will eliminate that sort of thing to a great extent.

I support the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern about the addition of powdered milk to bread. I had bread which had had powdered milk added in a tin in my home for eight days and at the end of that time we were still able to eat it. Generally one cannot eat bread after the second day because it is covered with mildew. Some call this mildew penicillin and eat it. Let those who like it eat it. The hon. member for Coorparoo said that by the time the housewife throws a portion of a loaf away it has become a very dear loaf.

If you add a little powdered milk to dough, you get a much bigger loaf. That presents a difficulty under the present system, because if the dough is cut into loaves of 2 lb. 4 ozs. and has powdered milk added to it, it rises over the tops of the tins and flows over the oven. Even if the weight of the dough is reduced, the addition of powdered milk ensures that every crumb of the loaf can be eaten.

The quantity of fancy bread now sold supports the suggestion of the hon. member for Fassifern that people would gladly pay a slightly increased price for it. A few years ago when Finney Isles & Co. were selling fancy bread it was common to see queues of people wanting to buy it stretching from the bread counter, outside the shop and down Adelaide Street. They were paying 9d. for a loaf that had no guaranteed weight. I should say there would be 12 ozs. in a fancy loaf of bread.

**Dr. Noble:** The people pay extra for quality.

**Mr. TURNER:** As the hon. member for Yeronga says, they pay extra for good-quality bread.

If we insisted on the addition of a small quantity of powdered milk to the formula everybody in Queensland would be happy, and I am sure they would be prepared to pay an increased price for their bread if that was found to be necessary. If the dough was properly conditioned by being allowed to stand in the bakehouse for the required period, it would avoid the ill-effects on people's health caused by having a "hunk of dough" in their stomachs. I should say that inferior, doughy bread is responsible for more ulcerated stomachs than is nervous tension or any of the other things to which they are attributed. You have only to work a piece of bread in your hands for a few minutes to transform it into a "hunk" of pure dough. Anyone can imagine how hard it would be to digest, and the amount of fermentation it would cause in one's stomach.

I feel confident that it will not be long before those bakers who are supporting the Minister in the introduction of the Bill will be asking him to legislate on a new formula. If a new formula is introduced, any baker who does not adhere to it should have his licence cancelled.

I commend the Bill. It is a step in the right direction. My only fear is that some bakers will not want to play the game. In some instances the first row into the oven is the last row out, and is beautifully baked but unfortunately the last row in is the first one out and is not properly baked. To avoid being caught with underweight loaves, many bakers considerably underbake the first loaves out.

I repeat, I have no doubt that before long the bakers will be asking for a new formula. When we get that, both the consumers and the bakers will be happy.

**Mr. NICHOLSON** (Murrumba) (12.50 p.m.): I realise, as every other member of the Opposition has realised over the years, that such measures as this are very necessary and I am very pleased that the Bill has been introduced. However, when reviewing weights and measures, other matters deserve particular attention. I do not speak of the unscrupulous butcher who weighs his hand with the pound of meat but I refer mainly to the sale of corned beef. The hon. member for Mundingburra has said that he is a corned-beef man. I am, too. I love a piece of corned beef or "salt jerky," or whatever you like to call it. However, because of the over-addition of brine, housewives are in many cases "gypped" of a great deal of meat. I draw this analogy because the Minister himself said that quite often the person who buys a loaf of bread pays for water rather than for solids. So, the customer who buys 6 lb. or 7 lb. of corned beef often finds that when it is cooked it is reduced to 3 or 4 lb. of meat, the rest having been carried off as steam or gone into water because of the excess brine. I think the Minister and his officers, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Prices, might well study

the matter and fix a scale of prices to compensate the housewife for the amount of brine she pays for as meat.

The suggestion of the hon. member for Fassifern that powdered milk, or powdered butter milk be added to bread to give more nutriment cannot go unheeded. The addition of that nutriment would offset the loss due to the inferior wheat we have to import from other States. Queensland wheat is noted for its high protein value; it is one of the best wheats for the making of bread, but, unfortunately, because of the circumstances that have been described by the hon. member for Fassifern, it is not always available and we are forced to import inferior wheat. Then the baker blames the flour miller and naturally the miller blames the wheat. In any case, the bread lacks protein. The suggestion of the hon. member for Fassifern is very sound and would give the bread the desired nutriment because in producing powdered or skimmed milk only the fat is taken off and the main nutriment is left in the solids.

**Mr. Aikens:** I wish the hon. member for Cunningham would tell us why the Queensland farmers will not grow the wheat.

**Mr. NICHOLSON:** For the simple reason that they are not getting the price. It comes back to the price structure in Queensland.

I agree that some latitude must be allowed and that legislation must be somewhat elastic; but it must not be flouted.

The Minister and his officers in many cases take into consideration Queensland's climate. For example, they know that, because of the dryness of the West, a loaf of bread lying on a shelf in a baker's shop for any length of time will decrease in weight. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that the weight of the loaf when it comes out of the oven is taken into consideration.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove mentioned that in the baking of bread the first loaves in were the last out. A good baker does not do that. He rotates the loaves so that the whole batch is completed almost simultaneously. I have watched them. The good baker removes the first row of loaves placed in the oven and then pushes the other rows back for further baking.

I have not heard many complaints about bakers in my own area. Every loaf of bread I get is a good loaf. We do not worry whether it is under-weight or over-weight. All we worry about is quality. Therefore I must disagree with the Minister for Prices when he said that the average housewife looks around for the cheapest goods she can buy. That is a fallacy. The average housewife is looking for value for money, not for the cheapest she can buy. Even if bread were 1d. a loaf dearer because of the addition

of the added nutriment of milk I believe that the housewife would buy quality in preference to quantity.

**Mr. Aikens:** The average housewife has not got the money to do that.

**Mr. NICHOLSON:** That is just ridiculous. The average housewife is not doing too badly. I have not seen too many on the breadline.

**Mr. Skinner:** The farm housewives do not think they are doing very well.

**Mr. NICHOLSON:** I have not had any complaints. The hon. member for Somerset may have had some of course. He fabricates his own complaints.

When considering the weights and measures problem and how much water is in bread, the department should pay attention to how much brine is in corned beef when it is sold by some unscrupulous butchers.

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (12.57 p.m.): I wish to make a few brief observations on a statement by the hon. member for Whitsunday. I am not suggesting that he is not conversant with all the ramifications of the baking trade but it does seem strange that the same position exists today as did 35 years ago. The hon. member talked about calling the dogs off. I assume that he is referring to the industrial inspectors who police the baking award. After all, the prescribed starting time is laid down by the court itself. I know from practical experience that one baker will tip off the other fellow. They keep tipping each other off with the result that they start to barricade themselves around with wire netting and even go to the extent of having Alsatian dogs about the bakehouse to prevent the inspector policing the award. I do not propose to enter this argument at any length, but there must be something wrong somewhere. It is no use talking about calling the dogs off unless the bakers are prepared to do what they should do in accordance with the law of the land. If the bakers believe that they are suffering in any way, if they feel that they are being penalised because of the existing law, some action could be taken, the master bakers could approach the court to iron out these anomalies.

Motion (Mr. Devries) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Devries, read a first time.

#### MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (2.18 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Miners' Homestead Leases Acts, 1913 to 1951, in a certain particular.”

This is only a small amendment. Under Section 21 of the Acts improvements required to be effected on land acquired as Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases by ordinary application are—

(a) For areas up to 20 acres, improvements to the value of £25 within six months from the date of the notice of approval;

(b) for areas over 20 acres, a good and substantial enclosing fence or substantial improvements to the value of such a fence within 12 months of the date of the notice of approval.

In respect of areas offered for sale by public auction, there is provision in Section 19 that the notification of sale may impose any special conditions with respect to the sale of any specified land. This provision has been used in respect of a few allotments at Mt. Isa to require improvements far in excess of £25 in value. It cannot, however, be applied to leases acquired otherwise than at public auction. The condition requiring only £25 worth of improvements on an allotment of say one rood in a township such as Mt. Isa or, indeed, on an area of up to 20 acres elsewhere, is greatly out of date. It is difficult, however, to fix a figure which would be equitable having regard to varying conditions in various parts of the State. For example, improvements of a value which reasonably could be expected on an allotment at Mt. Isa, would be excessive for an allotment in Coen, or an area of an acre or two required to grow vegetables anywhere. Accordingly the procedure suggested in the Bill is to amend Section 21 to provide that the value of improvements shall be not less than such sum as is approved by the Minister, on the recommendation of the warden, and specified in the notice of approval in each case.

The real purpose, of course, is to prevent profiteering on allotments in a place such as Mt. Isa. It can only apply to allotments sold by public auction.

This matter has been considered for some time. Since the development of the Mary Kathleen area and other places in the North it has been found that there is a tendency among people holding these leases to exploit the position. The provision requiring substantial improvements will overcome the position.

**Mr. Nicklin:** That can only be done if these miners' homestead leases are offered at public auction?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Yes. It only applies to allotments put up for public auction.

**Mr. ROBERTS** (Whitsunday) (2.22 p.m.): There is some merit in the Bill, but I can envisage some pitfalls. We see too many instances of government by regulation. In this case the Minister has said that it would be most difficult to fix a general figure for improvements. The Bill provides that that figure be left to the Minister on the recommendation of the warden. I am not saying they would do it, but the Minister or the warden could impose exorbitant conditions.

I cannot point to a real solution. I presume that the Bill does not apply to land taken up under a miners' homestead lease. The Minister has said that it applies only to land sold by auction, land that may have been secured for more or less a nominal rental.

Perhaps a solution could be obtained by taking a percentage or multiple of the amount paid at auction. Take the hypothetical case of a block of land sold at public auction for £100. A condition that the purchaser must effect improvements to the value of five times or ten times that amount could be imposed.

**Mr. Hilton:** There would be many difficulties if that principle was applied on the South Coast.

**Mr. ROBERTS:** The amounts involved on the South Coast may be chicken feed compared to those involved in the Mary Kathleen and Mt. Isa areas in years to come. Naturally land in the centre of a township would command a higher sale price than land in the outskirts. By the same reasoning if a choice piece of land was put up for auction in the heart of a city a prospective purchaser would naturally be prepared to spend more on improvements on it than if it was in an outlying area. I can see difficulties ahead and I should like to see something more solid and more pegged in the form of improvements than that of a person buying land at auction being told afterwards that he was required to spend so much on it. Perhaps it could be said that any person desiring to sell land held under a miner's homestead lease could approach the Department of Mines and ask what improvements would be required in the event of a sale by public auction. The position then would be like that with all other Government departments. A farmer cannot ask the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board if the Board is likely to cut off an assignment if a farm is sold. He would be asked to submit a proposition which the Board would consider. The same thing would apply if somebody submitted a proposition to the Department of Mines that he intended to sell land. The prospective purchaser would be buying a pig in a bag if he bought on something that may happen in three or six months' time when he could be told what improvements were required.

**Mr. Power:** Don't you think he should make all inquiries before he buys—as to what the commitments might be?

**Mr. ROBERTS:** He could if the department said that purchaser will be required to carry out a certain amount of improvements.

There are many instances where a prospective purchaser cannot do those things. A person selling a cane farm cannot go to the Board and say, "What conditions will you impose on this farm?" In many cases cane farms have been sold when a number of acres have not been in use for some years. The only way we can get over the trouble is if the sale is made subject to the approval of the Board. In the matter we are concerned with the sale would be made subject to the approval of the Department of Mines or whoever had the final say. I am not trying to present any obstacles because I realise what the Government are trying to do by this amendment. I am hopeful that we can get round the trouble by adopting a more solid basis rather than have things hanging in the air.

**Mr. HILEY** (Coorparoo) (2.30 p.m.): I should like the Minister, during the second-reading stage, to present to us something of the history and the purpose of miners' homestead leases, and then deal with their suitability not only during the life of the mine concerned but during the subsequent period when what was once essentially a mining area has become a permanent town settlement of a different nature. It seems to me that a miner's homestead lease is an unusual form of tenure designed to meet the residential needs of a temporary mining field. I do not think it was ever devised to meet permanent residential needs. It was in the bonanza stage of Queensland's mining that it was introduced. Mineral deposits would be found in an area, a town would mushroom, and miners' homestead leases were devised to establish a town on the field, which it was expected would probably be worked out in five, 10 or 20 years.

**Mr. Coburn:** A place like Ravenswood.

**Mr. HILEY:** Ravenswood is a small example, but I can give two greater examples. The residue of the Ravenswood field is quite small, but at Gympie, on the heels of a notable mining industry, we now have a permanent country town living on essentially rural industries. The other example is Charters Towers, which, although its glory has faded in comparison with its heyday, still exists as a permanent centre of the cattle industry.

**Mr. Gair:** There are many secondary schools in Charters Towers, too.

**Mr. HILEY:** There are many secondary schools and other public institutions.

When a town changes its character and ceases to be the centre of a temporary mining field, a wise Government should ask themselves whether the innumerable houses held under this tenure should not be converted to a more recognised form of tenure. If they had the necessary legislative power, it would be comparatively easy to convert miners' homestead leases to ordinary perpetual leases. It is true that the revenue benefit now flowing into the Department of Mines would flow

into the Department of Public Lands, but the fact that there was once a mine in Gympie should not entitle the Minister to say that he has a vested interest in the revenue from miners' homestead leases there for ever and a day.

**Mr. Devries:** We would lose revenue.

**Mr. HILEY:** The Department of Mines would, but the State would not lose a penny.

I venture to say that the Minister will discover that the owner of a miner's homestead lease has only a second-rate security for borrowing. I do not think any lending institution would lend as freely on a block of land held under this tenure as if it were freehold or perpetual lease.

**Mr. Gair:** There is a good deal in what you say.

**Mr. HILEY:** I ask the Minister also to give some consideration to the form of tenure on mining fields that, because of the immensity of the deposits and their low-grade character, will have generations of continuous life. If it was possible to tell in advance that a mining field would last for generations, it would be better to have the title to the land based on perpetual lease or freehold rather than miner's homestead lease.

I bring those thoughts to the notice of the Minister and, if he can find time, after consulting with his departmental officers, to present at the second-reading stage some prepared observations on the history and purpose of the matter and examine the propositions I have put forward, I should be very grateful.

**Hon. G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory—Secretary for Mines) (2.36 p.m.): I can assure the hon. member for Coorparoo that his submissions will receive very careful consideration because I think there is merit in them.

I should like to make it clear to the hon. member for Whitsunday that I have to give public notification right at the start that the land the subject of a miner's homestead lease is being thrown open for public auction.

**Mr. Roberts:** Do you mean that you are throwing it open?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** No. I notify in the particular area that the parcel of land is being thrown open for public auction.

**Mr. Roberts:** What I was trying to get at was the case of a man who had already got that land originally and who was selling again at some future time.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** No, if he has a miner's homestead lease on the property and does not comply with the terms of the Act, he forfeits, but, before anyone else can take up the land, I have the right to say I am going to throw it open for public auction. I must also set out in the advertisement the value of improvements to be put on the land. Obviously, if I gave a man title to a parcel

of land without imposing any conditions at the start, I could not impose any later because he would have possession.

**Mr. Roberts:** I was not referring to that. I was really referring to the man who already owned the land and wanted to sell it.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** The Act provides that, if he is not carrying out the terms, he forfeits.

**Mr. Roberts:** But if he has carried out the terms and in 10 years' time desires to sell it again—?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** We cannot repudiate that, once he holds the title to the land. Say he has four parcels, four allotments, and he is obliged by the Act to carry out improvements. If he complies with those requirements, we cannot stop him from reselling the land.

**Mr. Roberts:** You do not put any further restrictions on the new owner; is that right?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** No, if he carries out the terms of the Act he is still in possession of the miner's homestead lease.

**Mr. Roberts:** That is right.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** We cannot disturb him. If he defaults and fails to carry out the conditions of the Act, we take the necessary action. If he forfeits, he does not remain in possession. The question of someone else taking it over then is one for the department to consider. We might decide to put it up for public auction. Before doing that, we have to advertise that it has been thrown open as a miner's homestead lease and we fix the value of improvements that the successful applicant has to put on the land. I do not think there is much to be afraid of there.

**Mr. Roberts:** Oh, no.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** If a man is already in possession of a miner's homestead lease and he complies with the requirements, he can sell the property.

**Mr. Roberts:** The impression I gained from your opening remarks was that if a man had met all his obligations and, 10 years later, desired to sell the land, you could then place further restrictions on him.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Oh, no. This only applies to the land put up for public auction.

**Mr. Roberts:** By the department?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Yes.

Motion (Mr. Devries) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Devries, read a first time.

## GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

### INITIATION.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Governor's Salary Acts, 1872 to 1956, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (2.45 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Governor's Salary Acts, 1872 to 1956 in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

The reason for the Bill is the incapacity of His Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Sir John Dudley Lavarack. Already today we have made reference to his illness. I gave the House the full reports of his physician, Sir Alexander Murphy, on his condition, and the reasons for his inability to carry out the duties attaching to his office. It is not known just how long His Excellency will be unable to carry out his duties as Governor. In considering the incapacity of His Excellency I felt that the existing law would react unfairly on the present occupant of the position, or indeed, any occupant of the position. Under the provisions of the Governor's Salary Acts the Governor receives half his normal salary when absent from the State or when incapacitated and unable to carry out his duties as Governor, while the administrator, who takes over the administration during the Governor's absence receives half his normal salary and half the Governor's salary. The Bill has a two-fold purpose. One is to approve of the Government's desire and intention of paying to Sir John Lavarack his full salary during the period of his incapacity. The other is to pay to the Chief Justice, who is at the present time Administrator of the State, the difference between his salary as Chief Justice of Queensland and the salary attaching to the office of Governor. I think most hon. members will recognise that the Government's desire is only fair and just. Sir John Lavarack has served us for over ten years, and this is the first occasion on which he has been unable to carry out his duties because of illness or incapacity of any description. We believe that in all justice we should pay him the full salary. We also felt that the person carrying out the duties of Governor under a different title should receive not less than the Governor receives. Those

are the only principles in the Bill. It is consistent with other legislation introduced from time to time to deal with incapacity and cases of emergency.

Hon. members will recollect that we provided by legislation that an acting Minister should be paid the same salary as a Minister during the absence of the Minister, whether he was absent abroad or absent through illness. Provision has also been made for the payment of the full salary of a Minister for six months if he is absent through illness. Hon. members, of course, receive their full salary during illness.

My officers have made inquiries throughout the Commonwealth. In all other States except Victoria the Chief Justice, when acting as administrator, receives his full salary as Chief Justice and half of the Governor's salary. In Victoria he receives the full salary for both positions. That appears to be a little unreasonable. I think our approach is fair and can be justified.

To the credit of the present administrator, Chief Justice Mansfield, I must say that he was prepared to act as administrator and did not raise any query whether he should receive anything in addition to his salary for the extra duties taken over by him. He did not at any time mention any additional allowance or salary for the work he is performing in the absence of the Governor. I want that to be clearly understood.

**Mr. Hiley:** Have inquiries been made to determine whether any payment to the administrator comes within the tax-free category of moneys paid to the Governor?

**Mr. GAIR:** Yes. I communicated with the Prime Minister and was advised that while the administrator is acting for the Governor his official salary would be free of tax.

**Mr. Hiley:** I have always understood that the Governor personally paid certain staff salaries.

**Mr. GAIR:** I do not object to the point raised by the hon. member, but it is one of those delicate matters that should not be discussed at length. Suffice it to say that that position does not obtain today. Many Governors in years gone by bore a good deal of the expenditure on salaries and wages of their personal staff. They were in a position to do so, but the Government have now assumed financial responsibility for the salaries and wages of those people who were formerly paid by the Governor.

The Bill is simple. I think the purpose will be recognised by all hon. members. It is a just approach to the present circumstances.

**Mr. Aikens:** The present Governor is much better off financially than his predecessor, because the people bear expenditure in respect of the present Governor that they did not bear in respect of his predecessor, Sir Leslie Wilson.

**Mr. GAIR:** That may be so.

**Mr. Hiley:** Is that an issue?

**Mr. GAIR:** It is not an issue. The hon. member for Mundingburra might as well argue that the engine-driver in the Railway Department today is doing more work than the engine-driver in the department 15 years ago. I do not think such side-issues should be brought into this question.

There is a very generous sick-leave provision applying to the Public Service and we also provide that when a man is acting for another he gets the higher rate of pay. That is all this Bill in principle is doing. Sir John Lavarack who has been in the service of the State as the Queen's representative for 10 years is absent for the first time through illness and I think we should pay him his full salary.

**Mr. Aikens:** That is a principle in most industrial awards.

**Mr. GAIR:** The hon. member is not telling me anything. His record in the Industrial Court is better than mine because I have not opposed an application for an increase in wages by anybody nor have I opposed it as a representative of any authority.

**Mr. Aikens:** Neither have I.

**Mr. GAIR:** I disclosed that previously in the days of the late Mr. Ferry. However, this is all by the way. I have given the reasons for this Bill.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (2.57 p.m.): We support the measure introduced by the Premier and consider that the Government's approach towards this question of the Governor's salary is a fair and just one. His Excellency is incapacitated temporarily through no fault of his own and I do not see why he should as a result of his incapacity be financially worse off as a result. However, the legislation dealing with the Governor's salary stipulates that if the Governor is not able to carry out his duties and an Administrator has to take over from him he is entitled to half his own salary and half the Governor's salary. I have said that I think the approach made by the Government in this case is a fair and just one. The Governor should be paid his full salary during his incapacity. As the Premier said, in our Public Service the provisions for sick leave are rather generous in some instances. I am glad the Premier has taken steps to adjust the anomaly. The Government's approach in paying the difference between the salary of the Chief Justice and that of the Governor is also a fair one. The Opposition commend the Bill and think it is only fair and just to Sir John Lavarack who has given tremendous service to the State in the last 10 years.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra) (3 p.m.): I cannot quarrel very seriously with the provision of the Bill that asks Parliament to agree to the payment to His Excellency the Governor of his salary whilst he is ill. As has been pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, many workers get sick leave on full pay whilst they are ill. I do not think workers get enough sick pay, but that does not alter the principle that workers get sick pay whilst off duty because of illness. Although the Governor is in a different financial category from the ordinary working man, nevertheless the same principle should apply to him.

There has been a fair amount of criticism in some quarters since it was announced that it was the Government's intention to pay Chief Justice Mansfield the same salary as the Governor whilst he is acting as Administrator. In one or two quarters it was suggested to me that I should oppose it, but in all fairness I cannot oppose it because, as I interjected when the Premier was speaking, the principle is written into many of our industrial laws. For example, if a cleaner in the Railway Department acts as a fireman he is paid fireman's rates. Similarly, if a fireman acts as a driver, he is paid driver's rates. I will not go into the argument that the Premier and I have been having over the years. He can settle it once and for all by laying the depositions of the case on the table of the House.

**Mr. Gair:** I did.

**Mr. AIKENS:** The Premier did not. He acted in the same way as did the Attorney-General with the minute books of the Townsville Regional Electricity Board. He waved them about but would not give anyone a look at them. If the Premier will lay the evidence on the table of the House, where all can read it, the argument will be settled for all time. If all that I hear is true, we shall not have the Premier with us very much longer in Parliament. He will be esconced as Governor. Seeing that I do not want the job, I have no objection to the Premier's taking it on.

As I say, the principle is laid down in many industrial awards and I can see no reason why we should not apply it to the Chief Justice when he is acting as Administrator.

Speaking of judges' salaries, I should like the Attorney-General to answer a question. When a barrister is appointed as an acting judge and subsequently returns to his practice as a barrister, is he entitled to and does he receive payment as a judge until he delivers the reserved judgments on all the cases he has heard as a judge?

**Mr. Power:** He does.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Then he is getting both a judge's salary and his barrister's fees.

**Mr. Hiley:** He is paid until Judgment Day. (Laughter.)

**Mr. AIKENS:** That is the hon. member's second witty crack today. He must be in very good form.

To my mind, what the Attorney-General has just told us discloses something of a racket. A barrister can be earning good fees at the bar and drawing a judge's salary at the same time.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member is out of order in discussing that matter.

**Mr. AIKENS:** You surprise me, Mr. Clark. I will get back in order.

As I say, I can see nothing wrong with the payment to His Excellency the Governor of his full salary whilst he is ill. It may be criticised in some quarters, but the principle has been established for working members of the community. Neither can I see anything wrong with paying the Chief Justice the same salary as the Governor whilst he is acting as Administrator. If it was good enough for me to be paid as a fireman whilst I was acting as a fireman, or as a driver whilst acting in that capacity, it is good enough for Chief Justice Mansfield to be paid as Governor whilst acting as Governor.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Gair, read a first time.

#### PUBLIC CURATOR ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### INITIATION.

**Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona—Attorney-General), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1956, in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

**Hon. W. POWER** (Baroona—Attorney-General) (3.8 p.m.): I move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1956, in a certain particular.”

It is well known that the Public Curator has operated in the State for many years and has agencies in some parts of Queensland and branches in other parts. In 1924 a “branch” of the Public Curator's Office was established in Cairns and, on 1 January, 1927, it was decided to appoint a Deputy

Public Curator there. At that time it was intended to establish a branch of the Public Curator's office there, but, for some reason or other, no Order in Council was issued at the time appointing the Cairns office a branch of the Public Curator's Office.

Under the Legal Practitioners Acts, any person who has served in a branch of the Public Curator's Office for a certain number of years may, after passing certain examinations, be admitted as a solicitor.

The difference between an agency and a branch is that, in the one case, an agent is appointed and, in the other, a Deputy Public Curator is appointed. In this case, many people, including the person who discovered the matter himself, believed that the office was a branch because a Deputy Public Curator had been appointed there. Nevertheless the Law Society could refuse to accept service in the office as counting for the purpose of admission as solicitor because it was service in an agency and not in a branch. From the day the Deputy Public Curator was appointed in Cairns it has always been regarded as a branch. During 1956 the Public Curator Acts were amended to provide that the office of the Public Curator at Cairns be graded a branch office, and that Bill also gave the Governor in Council authority to create further branches. As suitable legal men become available we intend to extend the branches throughout the larger centres of the State. At the present time it is not practicable because we have insufficient qualified staff. We are having the greatest difficulty in obtaining qualified legal men to take up positions in branches of the Public Curator's Department. It is no use establishing branches in another part of the State unless we can establish them on sound lines.

The object of the 1956 legislation was, amongst other things, to grant to officers of the Public Curator employed in the Cairns Branch, or in any office created a branch, the right to have their service in that branch accepted as service for the purpose of qualifying for entry of their names on the roll of solicitors, subject to their passing the necessary examinations of course. The 1956 Bill did not operate retrospectively so that those Public Curator officers serving in the Cairns office were precluded from claiming benefit for their service prior to the creation of the Branch. This Bill corrects this position and makes the Cairns office a branch from 1 January, 1927. Thus any officer having served at Cairns Public Curator office is entitled to claim his service as qualifying service for the position of solicitor in the State of Queensland. It means that as from 1 January, 1927, when the Deputy Public Curator was appointed to Cairns we are making it a branch and not an agency. Consequently people who have decided to stay in that office will not suffer any hardship as a result.

**Mr. Aikens:** How many branches of the Public Curator's Office have you?

**Mr. POWER:** Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns and Brisbane. It is proposed to establish one at Toowoomba when we can obtain the necessary staff. It is also proposed to appoint Public Defenders at the different branches throughout the State. When qualified legal men are available we will establish free legal aid departments at the various centres. As it stands now it is necessary to engage local solicitors in the various towns for poor prisoner's defence. We do not send Public Defenders from Brisbane because the cost would be too great. From time to time it is necessary to engage counsel in some of the towns.

Some people have the idea that because there is a Public Defender every time they get into difficulty as a result of some criminal act, all they have to do is apply for poor prisoner's defence. When a letter comes to me for approval on the recommendation of the magistrate I ask the Public Curator to provide that defence. At the same time, I do not think that public money should be wasted to provide poor prisoner's defence for people with a list of convictions as long as my arm. Right-thinking hon. members in the Chamber and the public generally would not agree that the Crown should be asked to provide poor prisoner's defence for a person who is mentally and physically able to work. Such a person might decide to live a life of crime and when he gets into difficulties he applies for the poor person's defence.

**Mr. Pizzey:** What is the procedure?

**Mr. POWER:** It is granted on the recommendation of the magistrate who may point out that the person has no funds to provide for his defence. The person may be a married man who had lived a good life and then suddenly committed a crime. We do not provide for the defence of persons in the lower courts; only in the higher courts. I have issued instructions that when applications are submitted for poor prisoners' defence they must be accompanied by a police report. It is only proper that we should know the history of the person who makes the application.

**Mr. Aikens:** Would not that be dangerous—allowing the prosecutor to decide who should be represented?

**Mr. POWER:** The prosecutor does not decide. The police are the prosecutors. The decision lies with the Crown Law Office, not the police; and the final decision lies with me. The hon. member will not suggest that we should provide poor prisoners' defence for a person from New South Wales who had been declared an habitual criminal in that State. I do not think we should provide for the defence of people in that category.

**Mr. Aikens:** Or for some of our own local thugs and criminals.

**Mr. POWER:** The hon. member is getting more sensible every day; he is beginning to agree with me. Many of these offenders have numbers of convictions. Some of them have been guilty of robbing people with violence and others are sex perverts. Why should those people receive the benefit of poor prisoners' defence because they have not sufficient funds? They have been guilty of many crimes.

**Mr. Aikens:** And never did a day's work.

**Mr. POWER:** That is quite right. I am not prepared to provide for their defence in those circumstances.

We propose to create these agencies throughout the State to provide for poor prisoners' defence. Deserving cases will receive the utmost consideration, but the Crown should not provide poor prisoners' defence for a person who has many convictions. The laws must be administered on sound and wise lines. We must be just and we must have regard to the public purse, and see that money is not wasted. I believe that the amendments will have the unqualified support of the House.

**Mr. MUNRO (Toowong) (3.19 p.m.):** In considering the motion before the Committee two points present themselves. The first is the question of procedure. Although the Bill is one which I feel will be given the support of hon. members on this side, I think it is necessary to comment on the method of its introduction. I feel that it is not establishing good Parliamentary practice to give notice of a Bill which does not appear on the business sheet and then immediately proceed with its initiation. It is not good Parliamentary practice and I sincerely trust that it will not be regarded as establishing a precedent.

The making of laws is a very responsible business. In Queensland we differ from other States of Australia in that we have only one House. We cannot afford to establish the precedent of introducing and passing a Bill that is not on the business paper.

**Mr. Gair:** Does the hon. member complain about the Governor's Salary Acts Amendment Bill introduced today?

**Mr. MUNRO:** I understand that was introduced by arrangement between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. I did not comment on it but this is a slightly different matter and calls for some protest. It is not something that we should regard as establishing a precedent.

**Mr. Gair:** You have little to complain about.

**Mr. MUNRO:** I did not intend to develop this point, but as the Premier has interjected I think I should amplify it. There are 75 members of this Parliament. Possibly the Government members may have had some preliminary notice of the introduction of this Bill.

**Mr. Power:** I told the Leader of the Opposition this morning the principles of the Bill.

**Mr. MUNRO:** That does not affect what I am going to say. Some hon. members may have heard of it and others may not, but there are hon. members on this side of the Chamber who had no knowledge that this Bill would be introduced until about two minutes before the Attorney-General spoke. At that time we saw that he was going to give notice of the introduction of a Bill.

Although the Bill may be of minor importance, there may be among the 75 hon. members some hon. member who has a particular knowledge of the subject and who may desire to express his views.

Coming to the Bill itself, the Attorney-General will remember that only last year amendments of the Public Curator Acts dealing to a considerable extent with this principle were considered. On that occasion I, and from memory, other hon. members on this side of the Chamber expressed ourselves as being in accord with the general broad principle of the Bill. It now appears that possibly, due to some oversight in draftsmanship, there are some anomalies.

**Mr. Power:** No oversight in draftsmanship.

**Mr. MUNRO:** Perhaps some point not dealt with, because I understand the Attorney-General wants to make the provision retrospective in its operation. If there was no oversight in draftsmanship, it may be that there was some set of circumstances in the background which was not before the Minister at the time. In view of those new circumstances the introduction of this Bill to correct the position is in order. I feel sure that hon. members on this side of the Chamber would not like to see any injustice done to those officers who may have regarded this branch as a training ground. In view of those circumstances I think the Bill will receive support from members on this side of the Committee.

**Hon. W. POWER (Baroona—Attorney-General) (3.25 p.m.):** I am sorry that the hon. member for Toowong raised the question of the introduction of this Bill. I have always tried to be co-operative when introducing legislation and I called upon the Leader of the Opposition this morning and told him that I had four small Bills to introduce. I told him what was in them. I think I showed a desire to assist the Leader of the Opposition who has always been helpful and courteous in assisting me in any matter I wanted to get through the Committee. I repeat that I am sorry the hon. member for Toowong has adopted his present attitude. Had he consulted his Leader he would not have raised the question because that hon. gentleman would have told him the contents of the Bills I proposed to put through. This Bill is purely machinery in character. I want to make it clear that its introduction is not

as a result of a fault on the part of the drafting staff. On 1 January, 1927, a Deputy Public Curator was appointed at Cairns. Somebody fell down in the Public Curator's Office. I am not defending that person. I do not defend men who fall down on their jobs. An Order in Council should have been put through then. Some young men studying law today felt that they were secure because they were employed in a branch of the Public Curator's Office which did not exist. It was still an agency because somebody failed to do a job and put an Order in Council through. I examined the position to see if I could put an Order in Council through validating what had been done but was informed that I could not back-date an Order in Council. I was advised that the only way to clear up the position so that nobody would suffer was by amending legislation. I have made it quite clear that the Bill contains one principle and that is to make the Cairns office a branch and not an agency and so give the employees who have studied law in that branch, protection for the time they have been in that office. There has been no fault committed by the Parliamentary Draftsman or the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman. The fault lies with officers in the Office of the Public Curator.

**Mr. MUNRO** (Toowong) (3.29 p.m.): By way of amplification of my previous remarks I make it clear that they were made on the principle involved and no other. I repeat and emphasise that I regard the giving of due notice of legislation to be brought before this Chamber as something of great importance and one of the safeguards in our democracy. I suggest that the Attorney-General will agree on reflection that he could have overcome the difficulty if we had notice of this Bill in the early stages of this morning's business.

Motion (Mr. Power) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING.

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Power, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 3.34 p.m.